

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 4-12, 17, 18, and 20-25 are pending in the application, with claims 4, 5, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20, 21 and 25 being the independent claims. Claims 1-3, 13-16 and 19 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 4, 5, 17 and 18 are sought to be amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Objection to the Title

The Examiner has indicated that the title of the invention is not descriptive, and that a new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. The above amendment to the title is believed to accommodate this objection.

Allowable Subject Matter/Objections

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in the Office Action mailed August 22, 2003. In that Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 11, 12 and 20-25. The Examiner also indicated that claims 4-10, 17 and 18 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claims 4 and 5 to include all the limitations of cancelled claim 1 and amended claims 17 and 18 to include all the limitations of cancelled claim 13. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the objections to claims 4-10, 17 and 18 be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 13-16 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. patent No. 5,583,753 to Takayma. In order to expedite allowance of this case, Applicants has cancelled each of these claims without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein, thereby rendering these rejections moot. Applicants hereby expressly reserve the right to present the cancelled subject matter in a continuation application.


Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas C. Fiala', written in a cursive style.

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